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FIFTH COMMITTEE
Agenda item 116

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Conditions of service and compensation for officials, other than Secretariat officials, serving the General Assembly: full-time members of the International Civil Service Commission and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

A. Letter dated 1 March 1996 from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Pursuant to section VI of General Assembly resolution 50/216 of 23 December 1995, the Fifth Committee will consider at the first resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly, the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposal of the Secretary-General concerning the conditions of service and compensation for officials, other than Secretariat officials, serving the General Assembly: full-time members of the International Civil Service Commission and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, under agenda item 116, Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

I would be grateful if the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the matter could be submitted, as soon as possible, in writing to the Fifth Committee.

(Signed) Erich VILCHEZ ASHER
Chairman of the Fifth Committee,
Fiftieth session of the General Assembly

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B. Letter dated 7 March 1996 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee

Thank you for your letter of 1 March 1996 on the subject of the report of the Secretary-General on conditions of service and compensation for officials, other than Secretariat officials, serving the General Assembly: full-time members of the International Civil Service Commission and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

As you may know, the Advisory Committee has in the past reported on the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the conditions of service and compensation of the full-time members of the Commission, leaving it for the General Assembly to decide whether to apply those recommendations and observations to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

In recent years concern about this practice has been expressed both in the Fifth Committee and in the Advisory Committee given the increased awareness of the need to avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest. The Advisory Committee recently took this matter up again and its members reiterated their apprehension that since each and every member of the Advisory Committee was a potential Chairman there would be an inherent conflict of interest in taking up the proposals of the Secretary-General, even as they relate to the Commission. It is for this reason that the Advisory Committee has decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take the matter up directly. The Advisory Committee has instructed the Executive Secretary to contact the Secretary of the Fifth Committee to inform him accordingly and I assume he has done so. I would appreciate it if you would arrange to have your letter as well as this reply circulated as official documents of the Fifth Committee.

(Signed) C. S. M. MSELLE
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on
Administrative and Budgetary Questions